

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 305267 TOSEC 250094

NODIS

FOL RPT GEORGETOWN 2220 ACTION SECSTATE DEC 30 QUOTE

S E C R E T GEORGETOWN 2220

NODIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MOPS CU GY AO

SUBJ: CUBAN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA: GUYANA REACTS TO
ALLEGED USG PRESSURE TACTICS

REF: A. GEORGETOWN 2213; B. STATE 302692; C. STATE 303982

1. SUMMARY: GOG UNHAPPY OVER PUBLIC DISCLOSURE THAT
USG HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN TO GOG OVER POSSIBLE USE OF
GUYANA BY CUBAN AIRLIFT, WHICH ADDS TO GOG PROBLEMS
IN TRYING TO DEAL WITH SITUATION. GOG DEEPLY DISTURBED
OVER INFORMATION THEY HAVE RECEIVED (OBVIOUSLY FROM
VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR) IMPLYING USG PREPARED TO UIE
FORCE IN DENYING USE OF GUYANESE FACILITIES BY CUBANS,
GOG OFFICIALLY SEEKS ASSURANCE FROM USG ON LATTER POINT.
END SUMMARY.

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2. ACTING FONMIN HUBERT JACK (MINISTER OF ENERGY AND

NATURAL RESOURCES) ASKED ME TO COME TO FONOFF THIS MORNING (30TH). HE HAD FONOFF PERMSEC RUDY COLLINS PRESENT AS NOTETAKER.

3. WITH MINIMAL AMENITIES BUT ESSENTIALLY IN FRIENDLY TONE, JACK SAID GOG HAD BEEN TAKEN ABACK BY FACT THAT STATE DEPT SPOKESMAN YESTERDAY DISCLOSED USG HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN TO GOG OVER USE OF GUYANA AS REFUELING STOP FOR PLANES CARRYING CUBAN TROOPS TO ANGOLA (REFTEL C). JACK WENT ON TO SAY THAT GOG FELT OBLIGED TO PUT OUT STATEMENT (REPORTED IN USIA MEDIA REACTION) CATEGORIZING THIS ACTION AS PRESSURE. JACK SAID I WAS SURELY AWARE HOW DELICATE THIS MATTER WAS FOR GOG AND THAT OUR STATEMENT ADDED ANOTHER COMPLICATION, BECAUSE IT WOULD MAKE AN EVENTUAL REFUSAL TO CUBANS LOOK AS THOUGH GUYANA HAD CAVED IN TO USG PRESSURE. HE RECALLED PREVIOUS ISSUES (E.G. REYNOLDS NATIONALIZATION) WHICH TWO GOVERNMENTS WERE ABLE TO RESOLVE BY QUIET NEGOTIATION, AND CONCLUDED HE HOPED WE COULD CONTINUE DEALOGUE ON THIS QUESTION IN SAME FASHION.

4. I SAID I HAD NOT RPT NOT BEEN AWARE OF USG PRESS STATEMENT UNTIL I HEARD IT ON GOVERNMENT RADIO NEWSCAST AT 0700. I SAID I WOULD CONVEY GOG REACTION TO WASHINGTON. JACK SAID HIS IMPRESSION WAS USG HAD MADE NO PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT ITS DEMARCHES TO BARBADOS AND TRINIDAD UNTIL AFTER THOSE GOVTS ANNOUNCED THEIR DECISIONS ON DENIAL OF FACILITIES AND HE WONDERED, IF THIS CORRECT, WHY GUYANA BEING TREATED DIFFERENTLY.

5. JACK THEN ASKED HOW I WOULD DEFINE THE CONTEXT IN WHICH SECRETARY KISSINGER SENT HIS MESSAGE TO PRIMIN BURNHAM. I WENT OVER BACKGROUND OF MY SERIES OF TALKS WITH FONMIN FRED WILLS, LEADING UP TO POINT WHEN BARBADOS AND TRINIDAD DENIED CUBA REFUELING FACILITIES AND GUYANA BECAME NEXT LOGICAL PLACE FOR CUBANS TO SEEK ACCOMMODATION. I SAID MY GOVT HAD IMPRESSION GOG SHARED OUR CONCERN OVER FLAGRANT FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA, BUT

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THEN WE HAD HEARD REPORTS, SOME LATER CONFIRMED, THAT CUBAN PLANES HAD BEGUN TO TRANSIT GUYANA. IT WAS IN THIS CONTEXT THAT SECY. KISSINGER APPEALED TO PRIMIN BURNHAM NOT TO LEND GOG COOPERATION TO EXTERNAL INTERVENTION. I PUT STRESS ON QUOTE APPEAL UNQUOTE.

6. JACK SAID MY STATEMENT WAS OF SOME COMFORT TO HIM, AS HE WAS OBLIGED TO TELL ME THAT GOG WAS DEEPLY DISTRUBED

AT INFORMATION IT RECEIVED YESTERDAY FROM SOURCE WHICH WARRANTED CREDENCE, TO EFFECT THAT USG WOULD EVEN BE PREPARED TO RESORT TO USE OF FORCE IN ORDER TO DENY USE OF GUYANESE FACILITIES BY CUBAN AIRLIFT. HE SAID GUYANA HAD A WHOLE NEXUS OF RELATIONS WITH US RESTING ON FOUNDATION OF ASSUMED FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN TWO GOVTS. OBVIOUSLY, IF THERE WERE ANY FOUNDATION TO INFORMATION IN QUESTION, GUYANA, WHICH LACKS ANY SIGNIFICANT CAPACITY FOR SELF-DEFENSE, WOULD HAVE TO LOOK FOR EXTERNAL SUPPORT. HE ASKED FOR MY REACTION.

7. I SAID I WAS ALMOST POSITIVE I COULD IDENTIFY SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION, SINCE I HAD PICKED UP REPORT LATE YESTERDAY (I.E. MY CONVERSATION WITH VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR, REFTEL A) WHICH COULD EASILY HAVE GIVEN IMPRESSION HE DESCRIBED. I ADDED THAT I WAS BOTH SURPRISED AND DISMAYED, BECAUSE I FELT I HAD BEEN PRIVY TO MY GOVT'S THINKING ON THE SUBJECT AND I WAS UNAWARE OF ANY FOUNDATION FOR THIS QUOTE INFORMATION UNQUOTE. I SAID IT SEEMED TO ME BETTER ALL AROUND NOT TO IDENTIFY SOURCE OF THIS REPORT, BUT I COULD ASSURE JACK THAT I HAD ALREADY DRAFTED TELEGRAM INFORMING WASHINGTON OF WHAT I HAD LEARNED YESTERDAY.

8. JACK SAID GOG WOULD LIKE TO HAVE SOME REASSURANCE FROM USG AS TO ITS INTENTIONS. I SAID I WOULD PASS THIS REQUEST URGENTLY TO WASHINGTON AND WOULD LET HIM KNOW AS SOON AS I HAD A REPLY.

9. COMMENT: TENOR OF DEPT'S INSTRUCTIONS TO ME AND OF THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO BURNHAM LEFT ME TOTALLY UNPREPARED FOR VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR'S ACCOUNT OF WHAT HE TOLD BURNHAM. OF VARIOUS POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS
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I AM ASSUMING EITHER A) MARQUEZ MISUNDERSTOOD HIS INSTRUCTIONS OR B) GOV MISINTERPRETED OUR REQUEST. ONE POINT I FAILED TO MENTION IN REFTEL A IS THAT MARQUEZ ALSO SPOKE AS THOUGH HE HAD AT LEAST INTIMATED TO BURNHAM THAT HIS GOVT WAS INSPIRED TO ACT BY PRODDING FROM USG.

10. WHILE I STILL BELIEVE IT IS PROBABLE THAT BURNHAM WILL DECIDE TO CONTINUE TO ALLOW CUBANS TO REFUEL HERE, PERHAPS DELAYING PUBLIC MOVE UNTIL AFTER OAU SUMMIT, I BELIEVE HE IS LIKELY TO DO SO IN CONTEXT OF DEFIANCE TO USG THREATS. HE MAY BE DISSUADED FROM PUBLIC ALLEGATIONS OF USG PRESSURE, OR AT LEAST TO MITIGATE HIS REMARKS, IF I AM AUTHORIZED IMMEDIATELY TO GIVE JACK ORALLY AND PRIVATELY A FORMAL AND CATEGORIC DENIAL THAT

USG IS IN ANY WAY CONTEMPLATING USE OF FORCE AGAINST
GUYANA OR THIS ISSUE. END COMMENT.

11. ACTION REQUESTED:

A) INSTRUCTIONS FOR REPLY ON USE OF FORCE QUESTION.

B) INDICATION WHETHER WE PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGED DEMANDS TO
BARBADOS BEFORE OR AFTER IT TOOK ITS PUBLIC STAND.

KREBS

UNQUOTE

ROBINSON

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